

Jonathan Kaji: Professional Profile

My experience and achievements in business, community and economic development, government affairs and civic leadership will make me uniquely qualified as a member of City Council to address the challenges facing the City of Torrance and the First District in particular.

These challenges include attracting and supporting small businesses, encouraging economic development and job creation, creating more parks and open spaces, budget priority focused on public safety and emergency response, addressing the issue of homelessness by developing more transitional housing and taking the steps necessary to improve the economic status of the City of Torrance, by supporting an independent audit of City government.

BUSINESS

President, Kaji & Associates (1984-present) As president of this Torrance-based real estate brokerage, consulting, property management company I have negotiated more than \$100 million in commercial lease transactions. Past clients include the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Los Angeles and Denver, CO; Meiji Seimei, South Bay Toyota, Toyota Tsusho, Yamaichi International, Asahi Glass Co., and others. I have also been engaged in developing real estate development and brokerage projects in the Little Tokyo District of Los Angeles and the Cities of Gardena and Torrance, California worth over \$500 million.

As a real estate owner and developer, I successfully renovated the Western Plaza Shopping Center and 99 Cents/Sansei Center in North Torrance, mitigated soil contamination at the former gas station and attracted 99 Cents Only to occupy the vacant supermarket space.

Vice President, Marketing and Branch Administration, Merit Savings Bank (1979-1982) In my role as Vice President I managed 5 branch offices including the North Torrance branch with more than 200 employees. In addition, I oversaw annual branch purchases of more than \$2 million as well as budgeting, planning and construction of two branch offices with a combined cost of \$3 million. I also coordinated the overall planning and marketing strategy for the \$300 million Japanese American owned and managed bank. This included managing the production of television and print media campaigns as well as investor, personnel, and public relations.

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Member, County of Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors (2000-2008) As a board member I was part of a special team tasked with the retention of Nissan USA's headquarters on the 41-acre campus located in Carson, California. In this role I worked closely with Cities of Carson and Los Angeles, Southern

California Edison, South Bay Economic Development Partnership, and other stakeholders in the retention effort.

Commissioner, State of California Commission on Economic Development (2010-2014) Appointed in October 2010 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as a member of the State of California Commission on Economic Development, my work focused on attracting new foreign direct investment to California.

Director, State of California Office of Trade and Investment, Tokyo, Japan and Seoul, South Korea (1993-1999). During my tenure the office was responsible for attracting approximately \$1.9 billion in South Korean and Japanese direct investment as well as the export of California products to South Korea and Japan. As Director I managed a staff of 10 full- time and 6 part-time interns with an annual operating budget of about \$4 million and successfully opened the Trade Office in Seoul, South Korea.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Member, Little Tokyo Community Council (2007-present). As a member of the council, my primary focus is real estate and transportation projects impacting Little Tokyo. In this role I contributed to the creation of the “Sustainable Little Tokyo” development plan which calls for the creation of 700+ affordable housing units, transitional housing, community space, retail, and office space.

Member, Board of Governors, Little Tokyo Service Center (2009-2017). As a member of the Board, I provided advisory and financial support for the Little Tokyo Service Center. The LTSC is the largest developer and manager of affordable housing in the Asian American community, creating more than 1,000 housing units in Los Angeles County.

Member, Board of Managers, Torrance-South Bay Family YMCA (2001- 2014). The Torrance YMCA has the third largest budget in the U.S. As Vice-Chairman I was Chair of the Finance Committee and Board Development Committee for the Y, which oversaw an annual budget of over \$12 million and consecutive net operating profits. I also introduced Centinela Pet and Feed to the YMCA. This relationship helped to create a pet food support program for shut-in seniors in the Torrance and Carson service areas.

Board of Directors, International Visitors Council of Los Angeles (2014- present). The IVCLA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to create international understanding and cooperation between the Los Angeles region and the rest of the world by coordinating with the United States Department of State.

Spokesperson, Ad Hoc Committee to Save Keiro (2015-2016). As a member of the Committee, I worked to stop the sale of the 605- bed senior care facilities by non-profit Keiro Services to the for-profit Pacifica Companies. I was able to secure the support of more than 15,000 individuals, along with 16 members of Congress, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, and a former U.S. Secretary of Transportation and

worked directly with Rep. Maxine Waters, Chair, House Financial Services Committee, in negotiations with Attorney General Kamala Harris' office.

Member, Board of Governors, Japanese American National Museum (2003-2019).

As a member of the Board, I provided advisory and financial support for JANM, an affiliated Smithsonian institution and recipient of the Institute of Museums and Library Services National Medal in 2010. In 2015 I helped to secure a \$700,000 in-kind gift of technology from the SONY Corporation.

President, University of Southern California Asian Pacific Alumni Association

(2007-2009). As President of the Association, I introduced a resolution for the University to award former Nisei (Second generation Japanese American) students' honorary degrees due to the interruption caused by the wartime evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast in World War Two.

On April 1, 2022, the University will issue an official apology and posthumous honorary degrees to the remaining Nisei students. All the Nisei students will be recognized at Commencement ceremonies to be held on May 13, 2022.

Member, Executive Committee, Japan External Trade Organization, Los Angeles

(2000-2005). As a member of the Committee, I provided the Executive Director with advice on creating programs that would encourage American firms to transact directly with new-to-market Japanese companies.

Vice-President, American State Office Association, Tokyo, Japan (1997- 1998).

The ASOA organization is the umbrella organization for the U.S. state government offices based in Japan. As Vice-President I organized trade show activities in coordination with the American Embassy Commercial Service and the American Chamber of Commerce, Japan, promoting American exports and foreign direct investment.

EDUCATION

Gardena High School, Gardena, CA. Graduated with high school diploma (1972).

University of Southern California, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles, California (BA, History and East Asian Studies Center, cum laude, 1976).

Loyola Law School, Los Angeles (1976-1977). First year law courses.

Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan (1974-1975). Attended the Waseda Year-In-Japan Program.

Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan (1977). Attended Sophia University as a member of the University of Santa Clara, University of Notre Dame School of Law Summer Law Program.

PERSONAL My wife Lisa and I reside in North Torrance, California. My hobbies include golf, tennis, fishing, and supporting USC sports, LA Dodger baseball, and LA Lakers basketball. My favorite food is Mexican cuisine.

I have lived for more than 9 years in four different Council Districts, including District One. I've operated my business in North Torrance for more than 31 years. As a proud third generation California native, my family has resided in the South Bay for over 100 years!